

DEBRIEF OF A USAID  
PROVINCE REPRESENTATIVE  
QUANG NGAI PROVINCE  
VIETNAM

C12 1965 - 1966

No. 4668

## DEBRIEF OF USAID PROVINCE REPRESENTATIVE

## QUANG NGAI PROVINCE

## VIETNAM

1965 - 1966

Content Summary

	<u>Page</u>
Preface . . . . .	i
Map . . . . .	iii
Preparation for Assignment . . . . .	1

He has been with the Foreign Service for 18 years as an Arabic language and area specialist. He spent one year in Quang Ngai as prov rep and will return for a second year. He relies on French to communicate with Vietnamese province officials.

Role of Province Representative . . . . .	1
---	---

The prov rep's broad objective is to assist the Vietnamese so that they will be able to operate their own government effectively as soon as possible. Although the specific role of prov rep varies from province to province, one way all prov reps can help upgrade the capability of the Vietnamese is by relying on a Vietnamese, and not American, staff. The staff will get valuable experience and also be a source of information.

Housing and Travel . . . . .	3
------------------------------	---

He had difficulty at first arranging a house staff because few servants speak English or French. He solved the problem by providing room and board for one of the interpreters in exchange for running the house. He rented a large house with enough room for two Americans and several guests.

He spent about one-third of his time travelling about the province. He carried a weapon whenever he thought

it might be necessary, otherwise he tried always to distinguish himself from the military.

Quang Ngai Provincial Organization . . . . .	5
Province Chief . . . . .	5

The province chief is a civilian medical doctor and an exceptional administrator. Despite incredible military, logistic and administrative problems he has shown a great deal of imagination in the pacification program. The program was purely Vietnamese, conceived and launched by the province chief and his assistants. The success with pacification also had a positive effect on the refugee situation. This proves that when the Vietnamese are capable of doing something they will do it better themselves than when Americans move into the picture.

Political Processes . . . . .	8
-------------------------------	---

Most rural Vietnamese are not even aware what province they live in. Before a person can be made into a Vietnamese nationalist, he must first learn how to be a member of a village, a district, and a province. A national political institution can be not stronger than the low-level ones.

Political leaders in the rural areas are scarce. In areas just cleared of the VC the hamlet and village chiefs are appointed by the province chief because the VC would already have recruited natural leaders or done away with them. Several considerations must be made before a low-level leader is appointed: he must be acceptable to one of the two major political factions in the province, to the military commander and the district chief, and he should be from the local area. To recruit young, natural leaders the debriefee suggests offering high school scholarships to bright hamlet schoolboys.

Popular Forces and Combat Youth . . . . .	10
---	----

Quang Ngai's security situation is bad because there are no large American military forces there. In order to solve the security problem the American advisors and Vietnamese authorities emphasized training and retraining the Regional Forces and Popular Forces. The RF and PF were given cooking oil and bulgur wheat to support their meager salaries. Each new recruit who completed the training course also received cement and tin roofing to build his family a new house. At the time of the debriefing it was not yet clear whether the program was helping to solve Quang Ngai's military manpower problem.

The American discovered that there were 3,000 men--most of them former Combat Youth--in the province who were supposed to be active in defense forces. These men appeared on paper but it was unknown whether they actually existed. Efforts were under way to make these men operational if possible. The experience in Quang Ngai illustrates the national problem of having numerous local defense forces and the difficulty of making them all effective.

The American Effort in Quang Ngai . . . . .	13
---	----

Staffing and Policy . . . . .	13
-------------------------------	----

The American team in Quang Ngai is characterized by "an unusually high degree of coordination and cooperation." It includes 23 civilians and about 200 MACV advisors. The two persons the team lacks are an education advisor and a youth advisor.

Province-Region-Saigon Relationships . . . . .	15
--	----

Some of the people at the regional level are very good, but they cannot offer very much support for getting things done at the local level. He has found that simply taking action at the local level is far more productive than waiting for support from Region or Saigon. The support given by the USAID technical divisions in Saigon varies and much of it is insignifi-

cant. Overall, his dealings with Saigon are rare. Most of his communication is with Region.

When the Chieu Hoi program was set up there was no one at the province level who could spend enough time on it to make it operate. Now they have begun recruiting Filipinos with experience in the Huk campaign to advise the Vietnamese at the provincial level. With such staffing the program should be a tremendous success.

Relations with Province Chief . . . . . 17

He was on good terms and in daily contact with the province chief. They talked at ease about personal problems as well as official problems. During the 1966 Buddhist crisis it appeared as though the province chief might be working at cross purposes with the GVN, but he survived the crisis and remained at his post.

Vietnamese Employees and Training Programs . . . . . 19

In order to be effective American advisors have to depend on Vietnamese assistants to be their eyes and ears. Training these assistants is necessary if Americans are to succeed in working themselves out of a job. Vietnamese "area specialists" usually start out as interpreters for Americans or Third Country Nationals; in time they assume wider responsibilities. It is far more economical to have Vietnamese doing the job than to have Americans doing it.

AID's Vietnamese employees receive better pay than provincial bureaucrats because they work longer hours and must know English. AID never hires anybody away from the provincial staff. After coming to work for AID they are given English, typing and on-the-job training. Other training provided in AID's provincial training center is free and the competition for entrance is keen. When hiring and training local Vietnamese, AID is adding to the qualified personnel in the province; after working for

AID it is assumed that eventually the trainees will go into the GVN bureaucracy. And when they do, they will already have been exposed to the American techniques of problem solving.

Initiative in Problem-Solving . . . . . 24

He faced a warehouse problem upon arriving. There was insufficient storage space and the rainy season was approaching. Empty railroad freight cars and all available buildings were designated as warehouses. He and the province chief decided to build a new warehouse. The construction was possible only through an illegal use of AID commodities and by contracting a local builder, but it was completed in three weeks. Later, his supervisor told him, "Dandy. That is the way to solve problems." The lessons: 1) You must be flexible and adventurous in solving problems at the provincial level; 2) Ordinary structures may be more practical to construct than elaborate AID-designed buildings or prefab jobs that are too complicated for local laborers and contractors.

He also had a problem receiving adequate supplies from outside the province. The province's needs were too great to be supplied by air, and the roads and railroads were not secure. Flat-bottomed naval vessels could off-load supplies on the beach eight miles from the province capital, but the military could not spare the boats. He decided that moving things from Da Nang by Vietnamese junk was the most practical solution. With difficulty he convinced his superiors to let him try it, but they insisted on hiring Da Nang junks that didn't work out. He finally got approval to contract Quang Ngai junk owners and pay them out of his imprest fund. This was an unusual use of the imprest fund, but regular funding channels were closed. The experiment worked, but its continuance depended on solving the difficult funding problem.

Hauling commodities by sea helped solve other problems. It supported the local unions and gave work to the fishermen who had found their fishing restricted because of coastal security regulations.

U. S. Bureaucracy in Vietnam - Problems . . . . .	34
---	----

Acquisition of Goods . . . . .	34
--------------------------------	----

One problem he didn't solve was getting uniforms for the women's auxiliary force that the province chief was setting up to carry out social welfare activities in areas undergoing pacification. AID/Saigon refused to supply uniforms because no such item existed in their surplus commodity warehouse. He felt this was a weak excuse for failing to meet an important request put to him by the province chief and he conveyed his sharp disappointment to Saigon. Shortly after this exchange he received a large shipment of clothing to be handed over to the Montagnard Service. He consulted with the province chief who took part of the shipment as uniforms for the women's auxiliary. Once again he exchanged sharp letters with Saigon, this time with the Montagnard Affairs office. He felt that it was his and the province chief's prerogative to determine the ultimate destination of commodities sent to Quang Ngai.

Transportation . . . . .	37
--------------------------	----

In the area of transportation the U.S. has misallocated its resources. Because the military controls all but a few of the helicopters in Vietnam the GVN provincial officials can only on rare occasions scrounge a ride to the isolated districts. This results in an inadequate exchange of information and guidance between the districts and province headquarters. The political profits would be significantly increased if the civilian government had even a fraction of the logistic capability that the military has. This problem became especially acute when the refugee problem grew. The military generated refugees, but the civilians did not have enough transportation even to get in to see them. The military constantly says all choppers are being used for priority missions. The problem in Quang Ngai is compounded by the fact that the airstrip area is under sniper fire and American airplane pilots refuse to land there.

## PREFACE

The material contained in this debrief represents the personal observations, experiences, attitudes and opinions of the person interviewed. The Asia Training Center (ATC), the University of Hawaii, the Agency for International Development (AID) and the United States government in no way approve or disapprove of the actions reported or opinions expressed; nor are the facts or situations reported verified.

The purpose of debriefing personnel returning from Asian assignment at the Hawaii ATC is to:

1. Provide AID with management insights suggesting alterations in current policies and practices and to identify patterns, trends and problems which, when analyzed, will provide guidance for future assistance plans and programs.
2. Accumulate new or updated information for an institutional memory, for fundamental research and for application to future development assistance programs.
3. Provide material for understanding the cultural framework of a country, and the dynamics of its mode of social change. And, as a correlate, to discover customs, mores, taboos and other relevant factors which affect interpersonal relationships between Americans and members of a host community.
4. Provide material suitable for instructional purposes.
5. Obtain information which will be of value--generally and specifically--to American overseas personnel in their future assignments.

In order to obtain frank and open discussion, interviewees are promised that every effort will be made to prevent disclosure of their identity. For that reason, debrief reports are identified by a code number, unless explicit permission is granted to reveal identity.

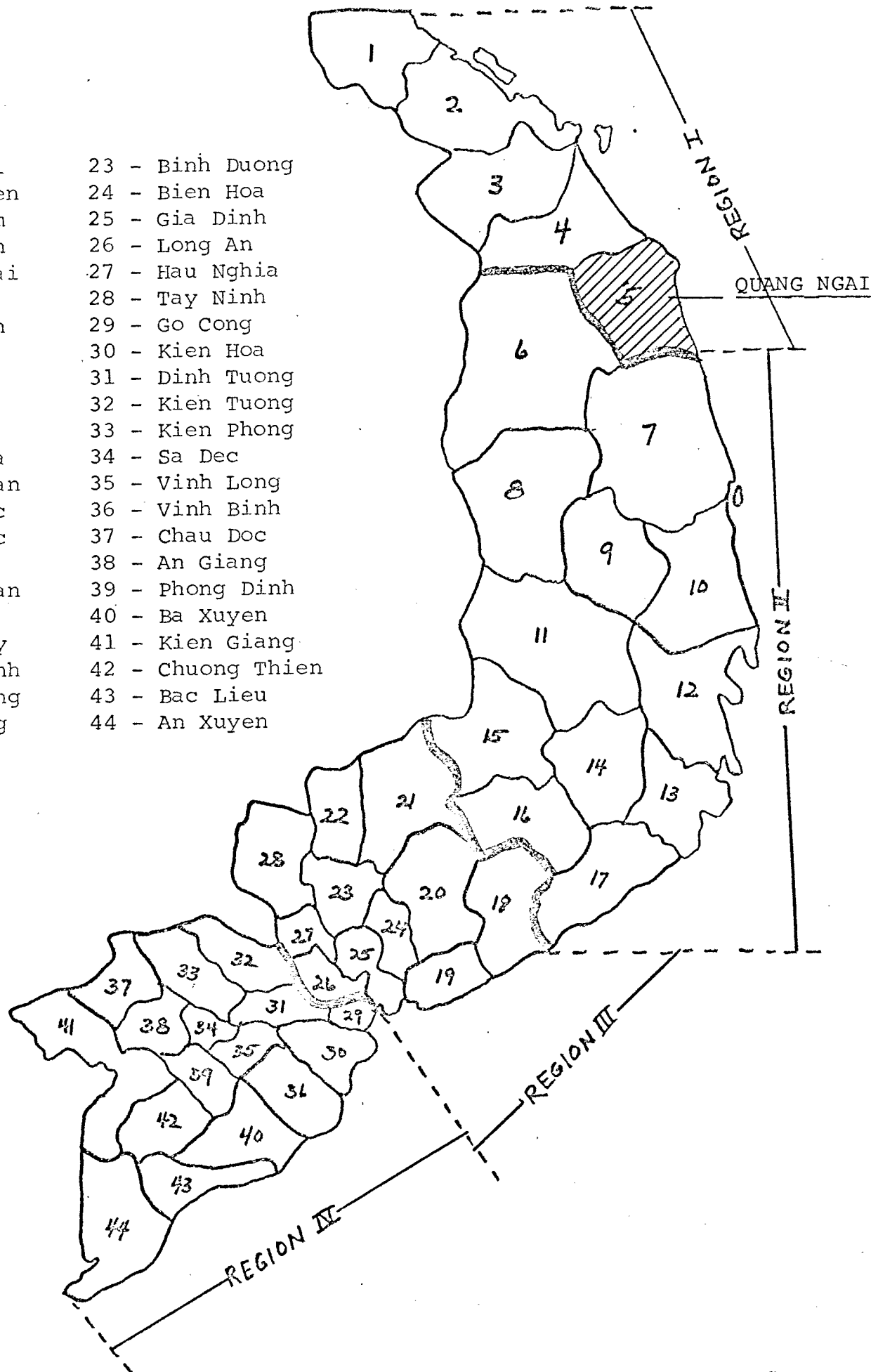
In the event, for some legitimate reason, responsible persons desire additional information regarding material presented in this debrief, the ATC in Hawaii will attempt to contact the person involved to obtain the required information or establish



direct contact. Requests for additional information, or direct contact, should outline the reasons for the request and should indicate what use will be made of the information if obtained.

Material contained in this report may not be quoted in publications or cited as a source of information or authority without written permission from the Agency for International Development and the University of Hawaii.

- |                 |                   |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1 - Quang Tri   | 23 - Binh Duong   |
| 2 - Thua Thien  | 24 - Bien Hoa     |
| 3 - Quang Nam   | 25 - Gia Dinh     |
| 4 - Quang Tin   | 26 - Long An      |
| 5 - Quang Ngai  | 27 - Hau Nghia    |
| 6 - Kontum      | 28 - Tay Ninh     |
| 7 - Binh Dinh   | 29 - Go Cong      |
| 8 - Pleiku      | 30 - Kien Hoa     |
| 9 - Phu Bon     | 31 - Dinh Tuong   |
| 10 - Phu Yen    | 32 - Kien Tuong   |
| 11 - Darlac     | 33 - Kien Phong   |
| 12 - Khanh Hoa  | 34 - Sa Dec       |
| 13 - Ninh Thuan | 35 - Vinh Long    |
| 14 - Tuyen Duc  | 36 - Vinh Binh    |
| 15 - Quang Duc  | 37 - Chau Doc     |
| 16 - Lam Dong   | 38 - An Giang     |
| 17 - Binh Thuan | 39 - Phong Dinh   |
| 18 - Binh Tuy   | 40 - Ba Xuyen     |
| 19 - Phuoc Tuy  | 41 - Kien Giang   |
| 20 - Long Khanh | 42 - Chuong Thien |
| 21 - Phouc Long | 43 - Bac Lieu     |
| 22 - Binh Long  | 44 - An Xuyen     |



REGIONS AND PROVINCES  
OF  
SOUTH VIETNAM

DEBRIEF OF USAID PROVINCE REPRESENTATIVE

QUANG NGAI PROVINCE

VIETNAM

1965 - 1966

Preparation for Assignment

I have been with the Department of State as a foreign service officer for the last eighteen years. I am an Arabic language and area specialist. I came into this program a little over a year ago when AID called on State for volunteers to serve in Vietnam as provincial representatives or assistant provincial representatives. I felt it was very important. My personal situation made it very simple for me to pack up and come over, so I volunteered, was accepted and have served in Quang Ngai province for one year. I'm going back now for a second one-year tour.

I had taken the national counterinsurgency course in Washington some time before, and dealt with problems of Communist subversion on somewhat more beginning phases than here in Vietnam. This was about a two-month course given at the Foreign Service Institute. It covered problems of development: National Interdepartmental Seminar on problems of Development and Insurgency, I believe. I had had French language training years back, and I speak it fluently. I had no Vietnamese language training. I use my French several hours a day, every day. This is my principal vehicle of communication with the higher level official, generally, and the province chief, particularly. Usually, their French is better than their English. Military officers are somewhat different; many of them have been in the States for a year and their English is better than their French.

Role of the Province Representative

It is the task of the prov rep to assure that the government of Vietnam is adequately responsive to the needs and the desires of the people and effectively counteracts and destroys VC subversion and insurgency. Secondly, it's to achieve the objectives that the advice and assistance are designed to achieve and to insure

that the USAID program and GVN programs are adequate to the task and are fully coordinated with the other U.S. government and Vietnamese programs. Finally, to train and advise Vietnamese so that they will be able as soon as possible to operate their own government effectively without external aid, material or personnel. As you can see, these have both short term and long term implications.

Getting down to a little more specific role as to what the province rep does--he's the advisor, the principal advisor, to the province chief on civilian affairs and similarly to the commanding general of the tactical zone and to the service chiefs in the province and to the district chiefs. He gives advice to and coordinates with the chiefs and principal officers of MACV, the U.S. Marines, JUSPAO, CIA, and the representatives of the Consulate General in Hue and the Embassy in Saigon. He's a spokesman for USAID in the province and he's a reporter of facts and recommendations to USAID at the regional and Saigon level. He's an analyst and reporter of the political, economic, psychological, social, and developmental factors in the province. There are a lot of other little things but I think that this covers it broadly speaking.

I think my opinion of the role of the prov rep differs from that of other prov reps in major part because of the differences from province to province. In other words, this role is geared to the province I sit in--to the problems that are incurred there. It takes due account of the kind of people who are filling the positions on the Vietnamese side and in the other American agencies there. Again, in reviewing these items here which are very general, I would find it very hard to believe that a USAID representative shouldn't be doing all of these things. If some of them are lacking, I think that somebody is not entirely aware of the overall responsibilities of his job.

There are several examples of prov reps who don't satisfy my idea of a prov rep. For different reasons, some individuals eschew working and having a Vietnamese staff. They have a team of Americans and, by and large, they do an awful lot themselves. It seems to me this derogates the rather essential point that we should be working ourselves out of a job. The only way to work ourselves out of a job is either the problems have got to disappear of their own accord, or more likely, that the capability of the Vietnamese has to be upgraded. Who's going to upgrade it? Obviously we're going to have to in one way or another or it isn't going to occur. I think the Vietnamese staff, by definition, is pretty necessary. There is a second factor: If you rely primarily on

an American staff, since very few Americans speak Vietnamese, this raises serious questions about how you really know what's going on and whether what you think is going on and what people are thinking and so on is correct or not. Or you must get this information from some other agency, hopefully, that knows what they're doing, but you certainly can't be getting it through your own organization. If you're getting it through some other organization, and you don't know the people involved then you're not in a position to evaluate it or knowing the personality and so on of the individual who's supplying the information, who's making the judgments. I think it's kind of an easy way of ducking a lot of problems. It's also something that pleases some people. Anybody who will operate with a smaller staff--this is a good thing in government bureaucracy per se.

### Housing and Travel

There are advantages in a Vietnamese "staff" in the home, too. The problem of cooks has been a very serious and difficult problem which has repeated itself three times as we have acquired three additional houses for USAID personnel. Anyone of the servant class or that could be hired as that class, doesn't know any English or French or anything except Vietnamese and only one of our Americans has been trained in Vietnamese. So--how do you have a cook or a housemaid or somebody to buy the groceries and do the laundry and so on, if you can't talk to them. We had some rather difficult times for a month or two until finally we made an arrangement with one of our interpreters who, in exchange for room and board, runs the house; he gives the instructions to the servants and so on; hires them and fires them; takes up our complaints. This works dandy. In the other houses, they are gradually trying to work out a similar arrangement. One has no problem because that assistant prov rep speaks Vietnamese. But they are out there in the boondocks--it's not like Saigon where you can look around and there are ample servants who have learned some English and French.

As for our house after five months of living more or less in a closet, in a non-USAID house which was rented by the deputy province rep, we acquired and rehabilitated a fairly large house in town. This is now my personal residence, and I have always had with me thus far, at least one--sometimes two--of the assistant province reps. We stash in enough extra beds so that all the visitors who stay over night--sometimes there are six or seven or eight--can be packed in too because there's really no place else

to stay. This place has adequate light--the lights are going. Usually the electric supply is deficient in the town, so it's not good light for reading but you can't have everything. It's not strong enough to operate air conditioners. We have air conditioners but they don't work very often. Our fans work, so that we can keep the air moving. A well is in the back yard--we boil water half an hour as per instruction.

I probably spend about a third of my daylight hours traveling about the province, mostly by automotive vehicle and quite a bit by airplane or helicopter. Not nearly enough by the latter--but all the opportunities I can get. I usually don't carry a weapon when I travel, but on specific occasions if we're flying over enemy territory to get to some point I'll usually take a weapon along. On occasion when we're going to an area which has just been cleared by friendly forces or where there's known to have been a recent ambush, road block or some type of activity of that sort--I'll take a weapon along then. In my opinion, no weapon should be worn nor should military uniforms or any parts of them unless there's a good reason to. And a good reason is one of those specific things I mentioned. When you fly over enemy territory there's a calculated risk that your plane will be shot down, or that you will have engine trouble and go down. In which case, you're not armed but you're on a military vehicle and there are military on it who are armed. There's little chance of you disassociating yourself from them, or of the enemy coming close enough to find out that you're that harmless civilian who just happened to be with them. So my reasoning is that the most logical thing is to carry a weapon too, so that in case of need you can support the others and yourself; the individual and collective chances of survival are better.

On the other hand, if you are just driving down the road, it's better that you should be in your USAID civilian vehicle without weapons or uniform because so far as we know, USAID is not a specific target. Otherwise, I'd be carrying weapons because an ambush is always possible; but I think our reasoning is that the ambush probably wouldn't apply to us; they'd let you pass through; you're not what they're looking for. Secondly, if there was an ambush we're usually driving the vehicle ourselves, so how are you going to use a weapon anyway? Your number one objective is to jam it to the floorboards and get the hell out of there. You bust through it, or stop, back up and get out. Your full energy is going to be devoted to flight. This is your best way of surviving. And if you don't succeed in fleeing then what are you going to do with a pistol or a carbine? If they have a road block it's not

going to be one or two VC--it's going to be four, five, six, eight, ten or so; if you haven't got a squad of troops with you or other armed people, you're not going to win. If you resist you're going to be killed; if you don't resist, you might possibly be taken prisoner and survive. In fact, we shouldn't be going into any areas that are specifically risky, and by and large, we don't, except when there's an awfully good reason for it.

We do run our own trucks from time to time, but we always check it out ahead. If I have a man driving up to Chu Lai to pick up some diesel fuel for these people, we will always check with MACV to find out how the road is wherever we're going. As of now, there are no problems, the road isn't cut, there are no ambushes, there is no activity. Fine. That's the green light--away we go. Which is not to say, since the protected area along both sides of the road in many areas is only perhaps a mile or so--a soldier can walk a mile in forty minutes, maybe, so that by the time you get there there may be somebody there. We avoid the excessive risks, we travel by day and not by night, we don't leave at the crack of dawn to go in areas that border VC zones, nor do we get caught out there late in the afternoon. That's asking for trouble. In the middle part of the day, late in the morning and so on, the risk is almost negligible because we have L-19's flying around here and there. The VC boy is asleep--they stay under cover during that part of the day, otherwise, they're going to be observed and they get the machine guns and bombs and so on--so that's a major part of our protection. They're just not around at that time, in that particular situation. In which case, there's no point in carrying a weapon around either.

#### Quang Ngai Provincial Organization

About 650,000 people of the population of Quang Ngai province are lowland Vietnamese, and about 50,000 are Montagnard tribesmen. About half of the population and perhaps 8-10% of the area is pacified. That would be a good half of the fertile, cultivatable area.

#### Province Chief

The province chief has shown a great deal of imagination in the revolutionary (or, at that time, the pacification) program which was conducted in his province despite a great lack of administration know-how on his side, and despite incredible logistic problems on both the American and Vietnamese sides. He never-

theless managed to inspire the people and his officials, and run a training program, and then a pacification program and returned nearly 50,000 people to their homes. He's had a profound effect on the refugee problem in the province. He cut it nearly in half.

More importantly, as far as I was concerned, when I arrived there, and when he arrived there, the military situation was just about as bad as it could get. The VC moved forward and friendly forces had backed up--by then we were an island--we had no access to the sea, highway 1 was badly cut off, and it looked like any night the VC might overrun the place. This was the view of our military, privately--as well as theirs. But within a month or two the military were strengthened a little bit and held, and subsequently moved forward some. When they moved forward, the province chief had trained hundreds of volunteers who went out as pacification cadre and helped the people move back, resettle, ferret out the VC infrastructure that stayed behind, and so on; he trained a local defensive force for self defense and, in effect, emptied a good number of the refugee camps and refugees in private homes. This showed that, properly pushed, the Pacification Revolutionary Redevelopment Program will work. There's no question about it in my mind or anybody's who served there. There weren't too many favorable things on his side.

To me another interesting thing was that this wasn't an American program, although we in principle had approved and are familiar with this type of program. It was one that he and a couple of his officials conceived, launched--we helped them with it but more or less after the fact, after the training was done, and the concept had been drawn up. This perhaps illustrates the point that when people are capable of doing something themselves, why they can probably do it better than if we're moving into the picture.

The present province chief has been in this position for the last year and a quarter. He comes from Quang Nam province which is around Da Nang. His father was a wealthy land owner, a farmer. He started his medical training in Hanoi in the 1940s. He moved to Saigon and completed his medical training there. He was a doctor in various hospitals in Saigon until about 1960 when he took part in the thwarted coup and was in prison for three years. He then returned as a medical doctor. He was a doctor in Quang Ngai province for two years, as the chief medical officer for about a year. From that position, he moved into the position of province chief. His appointment made some sense because he's po-



litically very savvy and he knows a lot of people. He's gone around in the districts and treated people and he has a lot of old patients around here who recognize him. He is one of the few civilian province chiefs. He's a very able man, a very dedicated man, and a very gracious man. He has the right credentials. I think he has done quite well as province chief.

As province chief he is also the military commander; but effectively, he has a deputy province chief for military affairs who does most of the work. He nonetheless interests himself and involves himself in decisions as to the deployment of troops that are under his control. However, these are the local forces or regional forces and not the ARVN or Army of Vietnam forces which are about in parity--I think they're about 6 thousand to six each. He reports to the commanding Corps general but he generally--not always but generally--reports to him through, or reports instead, on a day-to-day basis to the general in command of the DTA or division tactical area, who until recently was General Lam, Chief of the Second Division. Second Division Headquarters are in Quang Ngai City. So there is another layer which often tends to be invisible--it isn't much talked about--but it's very definitely in the echelon of the governmental administration--between regions, tactical areas, and then province. Every day he goes down to see the general for a half-hour or an hour or so and they clear their respective agendas on what's going on--what they'd like to go on and so on.

The province chief is exceptional among Vietnamese administrators. As I said earlier, the capability of the Vietnamese has to be upgraded. They have some abilities but I think there are several things involved that I see down in my province, at least. The Vietnamese training tends to take place mostly in Saigon. At the National Institute of Administration, which is pretty remote from the practical problems. I can't conceive in my mind that the officials in Saigon are really leveling concerning how you solve problems with officials in Saigon. Perhaps so, but it's awfully remote from the problems themselves. The individual just by mere fact of going to Saigon to be trained begins to be corrupted and it's cer-

tainly nicer there than it is going back to that dump in the province where he came from.

### Political Processes

The problems of provincial and regional development versus national development are very complex. I'll take an example out of American life. There are many. I've never heard it argued, for example, that the town meeting in New England or the school board in the school district any place in the country should be sort of shortcircuited or cut down on funds, personnel, authority or anything else because in some manner or fashion it derogated the authority of the national government or weakens it, decentralizing it, creating divisiveness and so on. You're not creating divisions, localism, provincialism. This sort of thing exists already. I think people have to learn to crawl before they can learn how to walk; before they can learn how to run and so on. You can't make a person a Vietnamese nationalist until he's learned how to be a member of a village and then of a larger entity which is a district and then of a larger one which is a province. Most of the people in my province are not even aware of what province they're in. Province is almost a meaningless term to them, except in the sense of the old days, I guess like an American who lived out West--I think Quang Ngai has about that meaning to a lot of people. Saigon, Vietnam is not very meaningful to them. I don't think a political institution is any stronger than the bricks it's made of. Bricks are these local, small organizations and components. If a guy can't operate effectively in a small local unit, how can he move up to a larger, more complex, more dispersed unit and operate effectively? I don't think he can. It starts down at the bottom and works up.

This applies for elections too. Elections can be sort of a joke in a way, a very necessary one probably. There would be an awful lot of people around this world who misunderstand the possibilities, the realities and the meaning of them. They have no resemblance at all to elections in our country. The hamlet chiefs and the village chiefs are elected right now by popular vote except in areas that are just cleared by the VC, where the province chief appoints them. That's quite reasonable; they should wait a considerable period of time until they find out where they've really ferreted out the VC. Realistically, there isn't apt to be any real leader left unless he's a VC stay-behind, because they'll have made him one of

them or they will have done away with him. The province chief will pick leaders in newly pacified areas on several bases about like a political leader will pick someone here in a critical situation. In the first instance, he'll pick somebody that he thinks can do the job because if they fail, he fails and so on. Secondly, there should be not too many from one political faction rather than another. I speak of a provincial political faction: There are two principal ones. Also some areas are heavily one faction and some are heavily the other, so obviously if you pick the wrong one for a given area you're asking for trouble.

Among the educated - and I use the word educated with implied limitations - there is a knowledge of a couple of political parties. Of 700,000 people in a province, there are probably about 10 or 15 thousand who are politically conscious, in terms of supporting one of these parties rather than the other. But they are the people mostly who have enough of an education and experience to be considered for one of these positions. Therefore, since each party is trying to build its strength rather than seeing it fall relatively, they are jealous of each other. There will probably be a few people in each village who are also politically conscious. Certainly, these are a very small minority, but a very important minority since they'll be opinion leaders. They must feel personal loyalty to any picked leader, because you can't have somebody who would like to cut his throat. He must be acceptable to the commander of the tactical zone; he must be acceptable to the district chief where he'll be operating because the district chief will be his direct commander. If it's a hamlet he'll have to be generally acceptable to the village chief - they won't necessarily ask the village chief. And hopefully, he's from the same general area so that he will already have a general knowledge of the geography and the ways of life and so on of the people. Some of them are pretty good and some of them are not so good.

I think the first thing you can say about leadership is that there aren't very many natural leaders running around in rural Vietnam. If there are, in areas where VC have been in control, they've probably been recruited. If not recruited, they've probably been removed and drafted. So you won't find too many. But if you do, I think that this will show, they'll be appointed to one of the other positions in a hamlet, or they will develop a business. How do leaders rise in our society? They don't have to be fingered by the government.

There are plenty of problems, plenty of ways in which they can step forward on their own. One of the things I'd like to do when we get a little better organized is, whenever we go into a hamlet, offer a scholarship of one kind or another and get the province chief to do the same thing, to give one or two of the brightest boys who finish the local school (or who will in the next year) a scholarship for a year to the high school in province. A few things like that. Actually, this may be hard to determine because there probably hasn't been a school there for the last two years, so how do you identify such a person? You've almost got to start the school and have school for awhile, or get the district chief or the elders to finger some child as being especially deserving or apt and bring him in. So that you're setting up somebody for later on identifying himself as being a leader. You know, they are grappling with a lot of immediate problems and a lot of things are being passed over.

#### Popular Forces and Combat Youth

A rather interesting project that we came up with was Regional Forces/Popular Forces (RF/PF) housing. A perennial problem in Quang Ngai and the number one problem has been military security. Everything, sooner or later, has fallen on its face and failed because friendly forces could not stand up to the VC. They're perpetually being driven back, harassed and overcome. So nobody had security. You push the VC back and run a pacification and reconstruction program and then a little while later, the VC would attack and depacify. It became essential to do something about it. Then all the marines came and helped a little bit, but not too much because they were a long way off. The solution, obviously, was more American troops which didn't seem very likely, or more Vietnamese troops. It eventually became clear that there weren't any more Vietnamese troops to be had either.

So, again, MACV and myself scratched our heads and said, "Well, let's solve it locally. Where do we solve it locally?" The Regional Forces and the Popular Forces are pretty low-quality troops. The PF more so than the RF. They're poor quality for a variety of reasons but to boil it down to the simplest elements it's because MACV and the Vietnamese army authorities don't care to spend the money, the time, or material on them. So, we said, "Let's see that they get paid on time, let's get

them uniforms, let's give them a proper training course or re-training course, let's see that they get the ammunition, let's get them better weapons. We can't raise their pay but let's subsidize them, let's give their families food." There was an ancient RF or PF/USAID program a year or so back for the support of dependents - let's hang it on this - support of dependents. We'll give them a can of oil every month; half a sack of bulgur wheat or something which has a cash value of 500 to 700 piasters. That raises a man's pay up so he's getting as much as a regular soldier and that gives him something to fight for. Then, the next thing was, they had 600 to 800 vacancies. They have authorization to recruit - the units are authorized, but they can't find the guys to sign up. Let's try offering roofing sheets and cement for a house to each recruit who successfully completes the training course and becomes an RF or PF. That sounded like a dandy idea. The province chief bought it - I got my boss, the regional director of USAID, to buy it - eventually Saigon agreed to it.

So, that was in process when I left. We had the group in training almost completed. In order to convince them of good faith, we took the roofing and cement and moved it over to the training camp and put it in the warehouse there so they could see it. Then we gave out one copy to one of the fellows so he could start building a house so that we could begin to check out in fact how well this works; what it costs the guy for what he put with it - his bamboo and mud and so on for the frame and walls. So we could get an idea as to whether the quantities were correct. The roofing is not too difficult but the cement is always a debatable point. The final word isn't in on this yet, but we think that in using commodities that come from outside the province to a large extent but applying them in a new way, we think that we probably solved a good part of the manpower program for the Vietnamese military forces in the province. If this works, as we believe it will, we will continue to work on it.

Another thing that we are working on is still in the study phase and relates to the same problem. I knew about it for at least the last eight months. There is a group, originally called Combat Youth --- the name has changed several times, but they come under the youth service. We made a little visit with the province chief one day. (In recent times the MACV advisor, CIA and myself, go to the province chief and unannounced just drop in on two or three of the services. The

service chief, on whoever is there, has the opportunity of explaining to us what's going on today with a little general background, the layout, and the program and answer all of our questions. This has been a very useful device.) Here our military advisors suddenly discovered that there were 3,000 Combat Youth, of which only a small percentage was armed but that about 90 percent of them are veterans - discharged veterans. I think we got the idea at the same time, but I spoke first and said, "Why don't we put these guys to work." The head of the youth service said, "Oh, they work already. They all have their regular jobs and every night they meet together and train - they build outposts and their guards are on the alert for the VC and so on." But since we have never seen any of these fellows at work, we suspect this is one of these paper organizations. The people exist but they are really not doing anything; quite obviously, since our military advisor didn't know of their existence and his counterpart and the province chief barely knew of their existence and just didn't pay any attention. Here's a cipher which, with perhaps somewhat the same techniques, could build up into a significant increment to the overall military posture there. Three thousand people are nothing to sneeze at, especially when most of them are veterans. They're working on that now.

I don't know whether it will be possible to transfer them into another organization. This is what we have to avoid probably. Recommendations for unifying Vietnamese military services are very common and they date back many years. As nearly as I can tell by studying recent Vietnamese history and seeing how many organizations they have of slightly different kinds working for different agencies that are addressing themselves to the same problem, I think this is something to do with the national character. You're trying to make water run uphill if you try to unify these. To us it makes sense. On the other hand, it doesn't make too much sense, because if we examine what we've done with state guards and reserves and various other things, we still haven't reached the logical point of unification yet after 190 years of arguing. Something will have to be done so that they will be a little more involved. Get them to a refresher training course; make sure that they are organized and utilized. We can do it ourselves essentially. The American officials in Saigon are not always too enchanted - and I don't blame them - with the brilliant fellows out in the province who are always writing and cabling in and saying, "Why don't you

solve this problem - do this, do that - we've figured out just what you should do in order to solve this problem. Just get the armed forces of Vietnam unified - get the Combat Youth grouped into something else." Like many of the things you do in the States - it takes an act of Congress; maybe a number of other clearances as well. There are many good reasons why it can't be done, at least, not at this time. So rather than address the whole theoretical and political problem and all its ramifications, we're hired to solve the problems in our province. They're smart in Saigon. They will recognize that this might have applicability elsewhere and they will also know whether that applicability is a very likely one or whether it is one that they better leave to one side.

### The American Effort in Quang Ngai

#### Staffing and Policy

USAID generally, as I read their program, has concentrated on more a long term and a medium term approach. Unfortunately, I think we have to win the war now within the next year or so, that we can't sort of diddle around generally and do good for long term benefits. There have got to be more specific accomplishments and I'll get into that as a problem area.

I think what characterizes our team in Quang Ngai is that we have an unusually high degree of coordination and cooperation. Never in my experience anywhere in the world have I worked with a U.S. team which has been more cooperative. These people would give you the shirts off their backs both personally and officially in the common good, as it were. There just aren't any of the little petty jealousies and problems that are so prone to rise within an organization, so this is a very strong asset that we have.

On the USAID side, we have 23 Americans who are involved in health and the hospital. In Agriculture we have one full time American, an Army officer who was picked out by the IBM machine as having a degree in agriculture many years ago, and assigned to USAID, in addition to his other duties. Indicative of the degree of cooperation that exists between us and MACV, and of the high order of understanding by our Army officers of the importance of the civil aspects of American aid, is the fact

that although this officer had other duties they gave all of his other duties to someone else so that he could really work full time on the agricultural problems of the province.

We have no Americans assigned to the field of education, and I stress that because this is one of three civil areas which was emphasized by the President in his Honolulu address. There are about 35,000 children in school at the primary level; probably 40,000 who have no educational opportunities at all. This is an area in which we should be doing something for the people to show that their government effectively cares, and very little is being done. The emphasis is illustrated by the staffing. I have hired a local employee who works on that subject. I'm a great believer that if you have problems or if you have a significant force - present or potential - and you're not using it; you're not attempting to guide it's destiny in the right direction, you're a sucker - you're laying wide open. The VC are not going to overlook that force; they're going to attempt to use it at least, and they may very well succeed if you're not paying any attention to them. The youth were demonstrating all over the place. They were the guts of the whole Buddhist demonstration movement. We permitted them to effect this. We got what was coming to us. We don't have any youth advisor. There are one or two in Saigon and that's it. That doesn't affect the youth down in our province.

We have two of our USAID province rep assistants, Americans dealing with refugee problems. We have one Filipino assistant who's dealing with administrative matters, primarily; one Filipino who's a radio technician; although he comes under my command, he is really working in the provincial office of communications - keeping their communications operating.

There is one USIS representative (JUSPAO), he covers two provinces. He's there about half the time. There is a CIA unit there which advises the pacification cadre in all of its major functions. It trains and advises the political action teams (PATs) and conducts the usual counter-subversive activity and the intelligence functions. There is an advisor to the special branch of the police; then there is a USAID police advisor who advises the regular service of the police. I mention him separately; the USAID office generally comes under my administrative supervision, but in program terms he's directed by the technical supervisor in Da Nang.



Then non-government, we have two groups of voluntary agency people: The American Friends Service Committee have several people working in one hamlet in a refugee camp, and the Vietnam Christian Service, the successor to the Mennonite Central Committee which is included in VCS, also has a team there that is beginning to work with a hamlet in refugee camp.

Additionally, some of the things that aren't involved are as important as the things that are. For example, we have no large American military force in the province. The military representation on the American side is about 200 MACV advisors; that 200 includes mess sergeants, and everybody else, so it's truly an advisory function and not a fighting combat force. The only fighting combat forces are those of ARVN and the provincial troops. Far to the north of the province, in part of one of our ten districts, the U.S. Marines from Chu Lai are extending their TAOR (tactical area of responsibility) down into this district, and as they are extending into the district their interest and involvement and our need for close coordination is growing. That sort of coordination was setup about two months ago and we expect some very good results to come of it as they continue to expel the VC as they expand their perimeter. The provincial services, the provincial troops, MACV, USAID, JUSPAO, CAS, everybody will be ready to move in in organized fashion right behind them.

#### Province-Region-Saigon Relationships

We have a fairly large regional organization. Considering the appropriate role of regional organizations, I think it's a fairly strong one. Any dead wood is in the process of being weeded out. We have had a few regional officers who were practically never seen or who were seen only briefly, and it was very difficult to tell just what they did that anybody would bother paying for; nothing showed on the provincial level. They've got some awfully good people now who come down and stay a few days and work with us. They have been very helpful in providing technical advice and support. But they are not the answer to the problem that I see of getting action down on the people's level. There are too many echelons and too many hundreds of thousands of people involved for a regional expert in education or agriculture to think he's going to make much of a dent on a few million people down on the grass roots simply by coming around for a couple of hours each month. Remember, he's advising the regional of-

officials primarily, and occasionally, the provincial ones, but then we still have the echelon of district, village, hamlet and finally down to the individual and his family.

I have found in my year in this province, like the old dictum which tends to be rather true in the United States, that the best way to solve problems is to solve them at the lowest political or administrative level possible, because the closer you get to the problem itself and its effect, the more concerned and deeply interested people are and the harder they will work at it, and the less preoccupied they are with competing problems. Whereas, the higher up you get, the less concern there is, the more preoccupied people are with many other people's problems; therefore, for one reason or another action is slowed and in many cases, never occurs. The province chief has had a similar experience, and we both agree that whenever possible, if we can't solve them ourselves, we ask for whatever logistic or personnel support or legal authorization we may need so that we can still do it ourselves on that level.

As far as the USAID technical divisions in Saigon are concerned, it depends on the technical division, and, let's be very honest about it, our relationship with some technical divisions is an insignificant one. Simply once a month we write our monthly report, we get the answers to a few questions that are included in the monthly report, and that's the last we hear of it until we write the next monthly report. From some technical divisions we get visiting experts; others we rarely hear from. Some of the technical divisions only have one or two or three people for the whole country, which is completely unrealistic if you expect a man to get anything done.

A good example, in my mind, of facing up to the hard unpleasant facts of necessity, is in the area of Chieu Hoi. One poor able dedicated soul in Saigon was trying to run the Chieu Hoi program for the whole country by advising the Vietnamese and the provincial reps. Nobody had enough time to spend on this in depth on the levels where it counted, and the program was not a failure but it didn't begin to achieve its potentiality. It ~~was~~ close to a failure. Just before I came out a couple of months back, I learned that they were in the process of recruiting one Filipino with experience in the Huk campaign to serve in each province in Vietnam - 43 or 46 of them. I don't know whether this is coincidental or perhaps in response

to my demands and many others - "For gosh sakes, give us somebody who can spend full time on that, at least long enough to get it on its feet and get it moving." An American who has the time who can just join the office staff of the Vietnamese in charge; show him how, push him, pull him, go together; somehow may get the thing moving. These Filipinos should be on site now. I don't know whether they are but I was told that was the scheduled time. There's no doubt in my mind, that with such staffing, that program should be tremendous. We should double, triple, quadruple the number of Chieu Hoi coming in; and those who come in should be treated in the way that they are supposed to be treated in order for the psychology, philosophy, and the aims of the program to be achieved. Then there's no telling where we'll go as military victories increase.

In other Saigon technical services, our contact is normally through the regional office because they will have a regional representative. If not, our regional director will summarize or group together (unless it's something urgent) the requirements and the estimates of all of the provinces in the region, forward those, and then follow up for action; or back the regional man who will simply solve our problem at the regional level, or explain why it can't be solved and why it shouldn't be forwarded to Saigon. So our relationship with Saigon is a rare one. I get to Saigon only every three or four months. I don't find it very useful to go there; I'm under the impression that they don't find it very useful for me to come there, and it's a long hard trip. Accommodations are lousy when you get there, so I much prefer to stay home and work.

#### Relations with Province Chief

I see the province chief every day, either in his office or in my office; or simply going together to some public ceremony or activity which usually requires an hour or two on the road to get to and from, so that we have ample opportunity to clear our respective agendas, and philosophize, and talk about things in considerable depth. Additionally, there are a fair number of social functions on the American side, and he conducts a number of semi-protocol affairs which we attend, so we see him a great deal socially as well as in the office. It's a very small town, and anybody who's anybody we certainly see a lot of each other.

As far as names go, we are on a formal basis, except I'm under the impression that, in Vietnam with people of his generation, you don't call a person by his first name, anyhow. He calls you so-and-so or Dr. so-and so. I've never in my life heard anybody call him anything other than Dr.X or Doctor - simply doctor this, doctor that. I consider our relationship to be first-name basis relationship. He wanders into my office any-time to talk about anything, usually it's an official matter, sometimes it's a personal matter. I believe after some three or four months I had his confidence. He's convinced that I'm honest and dedicated and fairly able. With my staff and the USAID organization, I can help solve a lot of problems that he can't solve otherwise; and on that basis there's a cooperative relationship - a good one.

There was a period of stress during the period of Buddhist demonstrations. I and my American colleagues differed as to the role and the intentions of the province chief. Some felt that he simply had gone over to the Buddhists against the government and against us; others felt he was simply being loyal to General \_\_\_\_\_ for a reasonable period of time, then if it didn't work why he could assume his proper role; others felt he was simply gutless and afraid to act, so he stood still. I felt it was a complex of all factors, but because he was a civilian surrounded by military and higher ranking people, he was probably being very realistic under the circumstances. He has survived. He certainly told us a few things that weren't true, but we pretty well knew it at the time, and I'm pretty sure that he knew that we knew it, but that's all he felt he could say under the circumstances. I and most of my colleagues are delighted that he has stayed on as province chief. He is a civilian so this helps. Compared to other province chiefs that we have known and met in other provinces and heard about from our colleagues, he's a real tiger - he looks great. Some of his critics have a tendency initially to compare with the ideal, but we're brought back to earth as soon as we start comparing with the practical - that which exists - that which might be available instead. If we don't all agree myself, the province chief, the U.S. in Vietnam - we don't do anything. I wouldn't think of doing anything to which the province chief was opposed because it won't work. I won't get away with it. I may occasionally overrule him - put the pressure on, so that he's not going along with it very gracefully but he will be going along with it. The day when we start going this way and he wants to go the other way - our usefulness is terminated. I think the relationship is a good

one now between him and all the American agencies.

#### Vietnamese Employees and Training Programs

In my province some things cannot be performed by the Vietnamese, but they are going to have to be performed if we win; assuming we subscribe to the theory that you have to convince the majority that it's their government - the one that they would choose to support. Secondly, we need the Vietnamese because we don't have the Americans and one wants to do something to address these problems and try and get some action. A local employee who is half-educated, intelligent, energetic, amenable to learning and following your directions is better than nobody. You can extend your span of activity rather considerably if you've got a number of employees who you can direct and send out to be your eyes and ears and mouthpiece, so we use a number of these people for this purpose.

At the same time, we're training them intensively in English and having them become an expert in the province in a particular subject or problem area. It's training in an indirect way. My interpreter or my assistant simply follows me around. He'll observe the way I do things and he will also observe other Americans and Vietnamese with whom I deal and see how things are handled. Through handling my papers, he will learn. Then from time to time, I'll send him out to do things and he'll either succeed or he won't succeed. He'll get advice and correction or direction from me on how to succeed better the following time; the same sort of direction that I would give to my principal American subordinates who by and large are younger and lacking in experience.

We eventually expect to have an American or third country national for each area, who either won't know any Vietnamese or if he has Vietnamese it certainly won't be to a level in which he can operate independently. He will also need the area background knowledge like this local employee has picked up. Each American advisor will have at least one assistant because he's got to have an interpreter - he can't communicate without him. The interpreter would be, in USAID terms, an area specialist who'd been more than simply a repeater of words, he'd be one who would have the capability and would be taught to go out and be an independent operator. In case the advisor can't go or it's not important enough or he's busy with something else, he can send

the assistant. If the need is sufficient, there may be two or three or four or five. In the refugee area, for example, where the needs are enormous, ideally GVN does everything and we simply have one representative in the province who advises those who need help and then they and their subordinate officials go out and do it. This level of competence and experience doesn't exist in Quang Ngai and it's not going to exist until the war is over and some time after. In the meantime, things have to get done - so either we do them or they don't get done.

So far this has worked out well in several specific areas. We have 23 Americans and Cubans working on the medical side in Quang Ngai. There's one 16-man military public health action team (MILPHAP Team, it's called) for military but their work is under USAID direction in the provincial hospital. We have three USAID nurses who are also working there. We have two men--one doctor and one nurse; Republic of Cuba medical teams. Now none of these groups can work without interpreters, without drivers to get them around. We do this program of hiring excessive staff and getting them trained. So that when the specialists arrived, they didn't waste any time spinning their wheels - we simply assigned this one, that one, and the other one to start work for them. Americans are extraordinarily expensive people at home, and much more expensive in Vietnam. I calculate that the total cost of this staff of local employees is approximately the cost to the government for me or for two American assistant province reps.

The staff is not quite as large as it sounds--twenty of these people are simply guards - they guard our office and we have four residences for the various government Americans. Some people feel that we don't need the guards; I think we do and nobody has nerve enough since it's our lives and not theirs to say we don't need the guards. They cost about eight cents an hour or something like that - quite a small sum. About a dozen of these people are drivers and a couple of janitors and this and that, so the actual productive level, the persons that we're really training to amount to something, who can move over into the Government of Vietnam bureaucracy in a year or two or three or anytime it's convenient or who can work for some other U.S. agency effectively, is perhaps half of these that I mentioned before. They are paid out of AID funds. We pay a little bit better than the province chief pays his own staff. Our scale is based on careful coordin-

ation with MACV, CIA, and JUSPAO. We pay better because our standards are higher. We require more hours of work per day; we require knowledge of two languages in most cases. In other words, it's like comparing do we have the same price for oranges as that other fellow has for apples - you can't compare apples and oranges. We're unfortunate and fortunate in that we have no contract personnel, no contractors operating in the province, and therefore, not too many of our Vietnamese employees hear about opportunities for more lucrative employment. Furthermore, since we have hired people who are living at home, there is a strong drive to continue to live at home - that's where the heart is.

We protect the province. We will not hire anybody away from the province staff, from any echelon of province or any activity under any circumstances. The province chief would have to come in and ask me on bended knees. A few times they've showed up with releases from the province - we've insisted that they get a release; well, we check up on that to find out if he's bribed some other official or what the deal was, because we know that unless the person is completely incompetent they can't afford to let them go. So this is another reason we run training courses. We need to add something to the overall personnel capability of the country and its administrative ability, rather than simply fight over the limited and insufficient resources that exist already. I'm convinced these people will move over to the Vietnamese bureaucracy after working for AID. It's not whether, it's when and under what circumstances. If not into the Vietnamese bureaucracy, I think the government will develop on the civil side and there will be great competition for people who have specific skills and knowhow. The people working for us will achieve a high order of practical competence in English and they will also learn through association the American technique of problem solving, which I think is the greatest thing that we can pass along out here - analyzing situations, drawing up plans for programs and what to do about it, and then putting the thing into action. So incidental to the primary objective of getting things done now which need to be done now, we're training a large cadre of people who can do things, who can move into jobs. The USAID training courses are not nearly as good as they sound. They've just started and I lack American personnel qualified or simply motivated, doing the best they can without too much background in this sort of thing. But, suffice it to say that nothing existed before and

we've got a going concern now which the Vietnamese are very thrilled about. The program is quite competitive to get accepted into and only the best secondary students are recommended for it because we have limited space. We intend eventually to extend this down into district level but you immediately have a problem because people in the district by and large have no secondary school. So your ability to train somebody who's had two, three or four years of primary school is terribly limited. What we have to do for them is to generate secondary schools, enough so that they can get enough more years of basic education so that then the bright fellow has a real possibility to move into the government bureaucracy or private business at a level commensurate with his brains.

We train in English, typing, and we give on-the-job training. I intend to give training in English shorthand but, that's a little bit down the road - their English has to get better first. On-the-job training depends on which section of the office you're working in. Your immediate supervisor is responsible for that.

In education I need two Americans. I need one to run the typing, shorthand, and commercial subjects and get that going - so that it's an effort on the Vietnamese side - so that they're doing it with our help initially and, as quickly as possible, doing it by and for themselves. They can with some help, but it will take a year or so. They've never solved the problems of getting the typewriters, the desks, the space, the paper, the teacher and so on. It will be ten years if they use the usual system.

The other program is for English. English is terribly important for these people both in terms of international commerce, private and governmental, and in terms of dealing with us and other foreign nationals who are important to their government and whose support and cooperation they'll need very much for quite a few years to come. The sooner a lot more Vietnamese - anyone who has a potential of being a government official or a business man - learn English and learn it well, the better for us and for them. Also, this makes accessible to them more American periodicals, newspapers, Voice of America, etc. Just sort of leaving it up to the Vietnamese and their regular school system is not producing results. It's producing the sort



of results that we had for years in our high schools and colleges where the old-fashioned methods of teaching French and German and Spanish generated people who had many units in a language but could neither speak it nor understand it. They could read it.

The people really seek this training. This is the road to the future. In fact, there are several Vietnamese typing courses in town where people pay good money to go there, because this is the way to get ahead and the ambitious will do that. Since we are doing it for free - this is just incredible. There is a tremendous line-up of people trying to get in there.

We're doing it in the provincial training center now instead of in the USAID office buildings because we've got so much USAID work to do and these classes were cluttering up the place; we had no choice. The provincial training center is just across the street and it was finally completed two months ago. So that made the space available; we moved right in there. It's the only training going on there, I believe, so far. This is the third aspect. I need a training officer. The Vietnamese are supposed to appoint one and the province chief has successively appointed several who have never effectively functioned. I don't think they will, based on past experience with that and many other things, until we get some motivated American who will work with the guy - make him his buddy - be his strong right arm - the same way I and the MACV advisor are with the province chief. He'd be stymied by a lot of problems without us. He's not taking any orders from us. He's running things and that's very clear, but we're his right arms and we're right there all the time and he can call on us and everybody knows this.

My agricultural expert has now taken over the operating responsibilities. I did the planning and the implementing to get the show on the road. I am trying to get across to these young fellows working for me that if you've got a problem you've got to sit down and figure out some way to solve it. Saigon can't help you; Da Nang can't help you; the Vietnamese can't seem to work it out. Is it important? If it is figure out some way to do it and do it. So this is essentially what we did. Other people said, "We have a problem, can't solve it. Well, that's too bad - maybe next year." I've run across very few problems that couldn't be solved in one way or another if we could find the time to address ourselves to them seriously.

### Initiative in Problem-Solving

One of the early problems we had was warehousing. There's about a six-month rainy season. I arrived about two and a half months before the rainy season began. It quickly became apparent that when it started to rain, we and GVN were going to lose a lot of goods or we could prevent that simply by not bringing goods in ahead of time - in which case since the rainy season impairs the transport of goods we could be sure that there'd be a scarcity and we'd be in trouble. We tried to push the work on three USAID prefabricated warehouses which had been allocated to the province. But, after a few weeks work, it became clear that the Vietnamese authorities at the province level, would not be able to move fast enough to select and hold bids for, and purchase and arrange the ownership of the necessary piece of land. In fact, before completing it they would also have to clear with Da Nang and Saigon and have experts come out there and double check. Additionally, on the USAID side, they would not be able to get the prefabricated parts there in time nor could they get sufficient cement and reinforcing bars to do the foundation. So, in short, those warehouses were not a practical possibility.

We then looked around to identify all existing buildings which could be pressed into service in case of need, either as they were or by alteration. We identified a number of buildings. We did the same thing out at each of the districts so that we could move as much as possible down into the districts. This would increase our storage capability if we kept them full. We found all the empty freight cars out at the railroad yards (the railroad doesn't operate anymore); except for a few of them which were occupied by refugees, the rest of them could be used and locked and guarded. We tried to use the half-constructed church which is of the proportions of a large cathedral across from province headquarters. It soon became apparent that both from the point of view of the Catholics who owned it, and the province chief's point of view as to the political reality, that it would be a very bad idea to get involved in any way with that particular project. It still had a considerable odor from the Diem regime - the hot potato that nobody wanted to touch.

It finally appeared that we just didn't have enough storage space. Further, we were wasting a lot of time out at the airport trying to get goods (we received goods by air) - the

planes would not come and we'd spend the whole day waiting for them. Then when you were sending the goods out to the mountain districts by chopper, again the choppers would not come on schedule or they wouldn't come at all, so the number of man hours of ourselves, trucks, laborers was just beyond all reason and prevented us from doing other things. So we decided that we'd build a warehouse and we would build it out at the airport where it would serve a transit function and eliminate the need for trucks. When a plane actually arrived, then open the door, drive the plane up along side and load directly into the warehouse.

It took us about three weeks to actually build this warehouse. First we tried to get the warehouse authorized. It quickly became apparent that there were no funds - it wasn't in the program - it wouldn't meet specifications, etc., etc. So I spoke with the province chief and he agreed with the need; he agreed with the location. He got in touch with the Vietnamese in charge of the airport and indicated that he agreed. I checked with MACV which has observer planes flying out at the airfield - they agreed - so we built it. Since we didn't have any funds, I took extra cement that we had and reinforcing bars and used that to pay the contractor who could then utilize them for other purposes. A strictly illegal operation - the thing was never authorized and never funded, but we built it and put it to work and we saved a lot of time and money. The province chief was happy; I was happy for the fact that he was happy. Everybody was happy, as far as we know.

I never had any negative repercussions. In fact, the USAID Director was in Quang Ngai at one time, and I showed it to him, and he told me exactly what the people in the regional office said, "Dandy. That's the way to solve problems." I think the lesson to be learned (if there is one) is simply that when the regular program can't be adjusted to cover something, don't give up - see if you can't adjust things down on the provincial level; be flexible to achieve the overall government objective. Sometimes it's best not to ask - just go ahead and do it. If you're really doing right you ought to be willing to stake your reputation and position on it. In this case, I think we guessed right. In fact, this worked out so well that we built another one down at the port and then we built another one beside it at the airport, so that MACV could have one. Then we gave the plans to the cadre who built a double one also alongside at the airport. Then we sent copies of the plan to Da Nang so

that we could send one to all of the province reps in the First Corps so that they could build one too. Our plans presumably were all right because they were based pretty much on the availability of local materials; they were within the capability of local contractors to build without special equipment or special anything. It was adequate for our needs. The plans had been drawn by an American engineer, a military civic action type, who was persuaded to spend a little time on them.

Now, a year later, the foundations for the other warehouses, the USAID ones, have all been poured and the superstructure is in the process of being erected. They very probably will be mostly completed prior to the rainy season, one year hence, which illustrates another matter. It is simply that when we take a procedure which is a great time and money saver here in the United States or western Europe or Japan and try to project that into Vietnam, it may work in Saigon or Da Nang where you unload the boat and fill the warehouse immediately adjacent. But when you get farther afield where there are several haulings and unloadings, and so on, and when you finally get to the point of erection - the type of labor and contractors and people available is insufficiently skilled to handle even a simple prefab. The debatable point is really whether you've saved any time and done a good thing, or whether you might not have - perhaps better and faster - built a lot of more ordinary structures. At any rate, to meet an immediate need we had to build some fast, and we did.

The perennial problem and one that is still with us, although it has been partially resolved, pertains to transport: Transport of personnel; GVN and American officials (primarily civilian officials) and our military advisors, and transportation of goods - construction materials, food, clothing, everything that we move. This should involve several thousand tons a month - it's a considerable quantity of goods. The traditional means of transportation is by rail. The VC destroyed the railroad about two years ago and we can't count on it being available for several more years. So we have to fall back on road transportation. But that's bad, too, between the six months of the year when it rains like mad and the VC ambushes which reach a very high degree of frequency and effectiveness. It would get to the point where they would block too much of the goods on route and destroy it or they would intimidate the commercial haulers to the point where they would refuse to

sign a contract at all or if they signed it they would not perform. To help mitigate the problem, air cargo ships were being used. Reviewing the situation, it quickly became apparent to me that that wouldn't solve our needs unless they assigned to our province practically all the air cargo ships in Vietnam, which is not realistic. I could see also that our province capital which is only eight miles from the sea (shortly after I arrived the VC had been run out of that area) gave us a sea access which wasn't being used.

But there are other provinces which have no land or sea capability and they either had to be supplied by air or go without. So I objected strenuously to us being supplied by air and insisted that we should get more trucks moving. I asked for more trucks to be assigned to us and I asked for contracts to be made - not just in Da Nang but by truckers in our province who would go to Da Nang. The request went to Da Nang where we have a logistics man, and from there to Saigon. There were a lot of fingers in the pie in logistics. It was quite clear that there was apparently only one person who had contracting authority - who could sign any contracts. I could immediately see that this would fit a situation some years back before we had representatives in all the provinces but didn't fit the situation existing now. Obviously this man couldn't sign all the contracts in Saigon and then do it in forty-three provinces and three cities. It just meant that you couldn't sign contracts on that level. So that was no solution. I argued that we should be able to get LSTs, LCMs, various types of flat bottomed naval vessels but eventually it became quite clear that these were in very short supply. They would continually be in very short supply and we couldn't get any. The U.S. military couldn't get near enough for their needs.

So more thought - and it seemed clear that using Vietnamese junks, both sail and motorized, would give us a capability far in excess of our needs. I spent the better part of the last eight months working on this to try to get junks to be used by somebody from somewhere contracting with some junk either in our province or Saigon or Da Nang, to get this stuff moving. The simple argument is that the Vietnamese themselves do this for commercial purposes - the private individual, the practical man, the guy who has to make a piaster or a buck. If he finds this feasible, so why don't we? Well, you know, we don't do things that way - we ship things in big modern ships

and again, this is the Vietnamese problem - it's not our problem. Well it's not in their budget. I think we taught them some bad habits, too, because it's beginning to be not in their thinking either to use junks. They too are thinking of going modern - going first-class and so on. Anyway, this thing has been argued back and forth. I've discussed it with at least ten different delegations from logistics and public works and ports and harbors and God knows what - there have been at least twenty delegations in that province within the last eight months checking up. Well, the port isn't adequate; well, the road from the port isn't adequate; well, what can we do about this or that; well, if we decide we should send things by ship, wouldn't it be better to use this kind or that kind or the other kind. They're still flapping around about what they might be able to do about the port.

Finally, I got agreement on principle in sending junks and they sent them from Da Nang. We signed a contract that cost fifty percent more than the price by road which shocked me considerably. I raised objections and I was quickly told, "Look, do you want things by junk or don't you? After all, it's the first time, it's experimental. Let's see how it works out, and also, you know, the labor union is involved and the United States tries to help the labor unions, and so on." It sounded to me like some big fat cat is involved. But anyway, I kept still. They made about two hauls and then that was the last we ever heard of them. Eventually, I said, "Well, they're not doing anything. How about contracting with the junks in our province?" These guys used to work with the VC; the VC controlled the whole coast. Now a lot of them are under our control. What are we doing for them? We're restricting areas so that they are having a hard time going fishing and getting back. All that they get from us is bad news. Why don't we give them a little good news? Let's give them a contract so that instead of the fat cat in Da Nang getting the money, the ordinary people in this province are getting some benefits. And if the guy steals it, we've got his family, his worldly goods as a hostage here. He's going to be good. He's going to make sure that it gets back here. These fellows in Da Nang, the big city, they come here - a lot of stuff is missing - they go back to Da Nang and we may never see them again. We had agreement in principle but nothing happened.

Finally, I talked to the local head man of the junk owners

association and he gave me a price which was a little bit more than half the amount the junkers from Da Nang were getting. Just as he left, he said, "Oh, by the way, I can get trucks too. Would you like to haul another hundred tons by truck?" I said, "Oh, really? Well, as a matter of fact, I would. What's the price on those?" The truck price was better too. We had trouble getting things from the port into town. We don't have enough trucks; the ones that we had we gave to the province for this type of internal hauling service. So we cranked into his contract that he not only would haul it from Da Nang to the port, but then he would transfer it from the boat to the shore and put it onto I don't care what, tri-Lambrettas, bicycles, people's backs, little horse drawn carts--there are many different ways they haul things--and haul it right in and deliver it to our warehouse. We would unload it at the warehouse and take custody. And he would have deducted from his salary payment, the black market value of any sack or any commodity that was missing to the extent that it was missing.

When I got this, I got hold of Da Nang again and I said, "Look this has gone on long enough now. Here we have it. How about it. Can't I contract?" "No--it's this fellow in Saigon and he said he's coming down and so on." I said, "That was a month ago and we haven't seen or heard anything from him. Now how about it?" The boss thought it was a good idea and I got together with his administrative officer. Now how were we going to pay for it? He said, "Let's use the imprest fund." This is a fund for solving unusual problems. We have two of them, supposedly. It's the provincial representative's imprest fund. It involves the piaster equivalent of almost five hundred dollars. It's a revolving fund, as we would call it, but out there it's an imprest fund--I think it's a military term. So this imprest or revolving fund; one is for administrative purposes and the other is for program purposes which are supposed to be channeled through the province chief to make sure that he gets credit, that he approves of it, and that it is really a serious problem from his point of view, too. The province rep doesn't become a little king with this stuff. He was all for it.

The administrative officer said, "Fine. I know that this will cost you four times as much as your imprest fund but I'll either come down there or you come up here as soon as you get the bills but I have to have the receipts." I said, "Well, I can borrow the money from my neighbors over here, another U.S.

agency, to pay them. And then I'll get the receipts and take all of the receipts to you." I give him a receipt and he replenishes my imprest fund, and then I give him a receipt for another quarter of what I had paid and he replenishes, and I give him another one and he replenishes, and then I give him another one and he replenishes. The bills have all been paid through the imprest fund and I still have five hundred in my imprest fund and the contractor has his two thousand dollars for hauling 200 tons or whatever it is of commodities. We've solved the problem simply by signing a few documents and doing a little bit of paying. A lot of people down in Quang Ngai who haven't gotten anything out of the government suddenly have a stake in that government continuing to operate effectively down there. And we cut the price in half. They'll do it regularly, whereas we found out that for political (or Lord knows what) reasons the junkies in Da Nang would just move whenever they felt like it - and very often they didn't feel like moving at all. So we would sit there starving and doing without. As it was, approximately a hundred tons were moved by each way. Before I left, this was confirmed to me. It was primarily cement at that time--we were getting short; we were heavily committed for the Revolutionary Development Program.

I was sure I was going to be backed by my boss in Da Nang--by the guy holding the money to replenish the imprest fund. But if he doesn't agree with my definition of this being a proper expenditure, he can refuse to replenish my voucher; in which case, I have to take the money out of my pocket and pay it.

The imprest fund is a USAID fund for administrative matters--buy pencils downtown or repair the tire on a vehicle or any simple administrative matters. It's a petty cash fund, if you will. So in a case of real need you can fall back on this fund. The fund was created in response to pleas from USAID province reps ever since I've been there--"For God's sake, give us something to solve problems." We're not afraid to spend it--we can act; whereas the province chief, Saigon, the Chief of Revolutionary Development, the finance chief--they're all scared.

The other imprest fund is for revolutionary development purposes. I heard it's been abolished--I don't know yet whether it's true. The sub-sector fund was an imprest fund for revolutionary devel-



opment and other emergency matters in each subsector.

The province chief has a million piasters - the revolutionary development budget. That's the most difficult chapter of the whole budget. I'm teaching them little by little - every single one of his service chiefs balks at spending any of that; the treasury man balks, the finance chief balks, they are all of them afraid of it - boy, they're afraid of it. That, for example, is where I would have tried to cover the transportation, except that there is a clause in the revolutionary development law or budget for this past year which says that the emergency million p's may not be used for transportation. There are a number of things that it may not be used for and transportation is one of them. The man in the Saigon office might have tried to get around that, but again, here was this guy sitting in my office ready to move, and anytime you send to Saigon for anything, it takes weeks. Now I have to go through Da Nang as well. And again, the Saigon man has got a million and one big problems. I know he agrees with me on this - he would push it - but he cannot order the province chief and the other guys to do it. He can go over to Revolutionary Development and maybe get a special dispensation on it. This would be one way to handle the emergency. I would have to get the province chief and his people to write up the case, and it would be a month or two - but half of the dry season was already over. So we're going to diddle around for another month or two and then we'll get the dispensation and there's another month left before it starts to rain like hell, and once it starts to rain the monsoon is there, and these junks can't navigate any more. We've got to use them right up to the hilt during the good weather because they're not going to be our ace-in-the-hole during the bad weather.

Whether this use of junks has continued or not depends on whether the man who replaced me was willing to sign more contracts and go through this procedure, or whether Da Nang or Saigon has devised a more simple and direct procedure, or whether (as I've heard) the imprest fund has been done away with; in which case, this effective tool has been removed from our hands. Possibly, the province chief has managed to crank this into the Revolutionary Development Program - this I doubt very much, but it's one way of handling it. So, I don't know whether this procedure has become a regular thing. I know that the initial experiment worked. The stuff was delivered and the guy was paid. Sup-

posedly at that point, assuming that there wasn't a big loss, then another contract would be signed which would be to haul so many thousands of tons - not less than so many tons per week for the next three months or something. Instead of being a one-shot affair it would be a standing contract, same as they had in Da Nang, but in Da Nang there was no penalty in the contract for not conforming. He just didn't move the stuff.

I have no idea either if our junks pay a VC tax. I've got a lower rate than anybody you can get in Da Nang, that's all I know. So if the guy can deliver them, I've saved our government money and I've gotten the goods there, neither of which Da Nang has been able to do in satisfactory quantities. Anyway, do we ask any trucker in the United States whether he pays off some union or if he pays off some gang of crooks who has threatened to put him out of business if he doesn't kick back something. If we think about it, we know that it may very well be true - not always, but in some cases. But we don't ask; it's none of our business in the first instance, and that's not the question anyway. The real question is, do we need something bad enough to pay for it. The guy may not pay anything to the VC at all, but maybe he's convinced the VC that he'd hand it all over to them anyway - that the money means nothing to him. We have some dedicated people on our side, too, who aren't interested in the money.

Some people argue against doing anything about this problem because in a couple of years everything is going to be dandy. But we've got a lot of problems to solve before a couple of years roll around and their estimate might not be accurate in any case. Furthermore, the sea has always provided an extraordinarily cheap mode of transport as compared with rail and road. Now admittedly, if you run into a double handling problem by sea and a further short trans-shipment problem, the extra labor costs and surface transport cost might make the sea route more expensive. Also during the stormy season it's easier by rail or by road. But I'm not at all convinced that sea transportation may not very well in practice turn out to be cheaper than rail or road. Therefore, a highly competitive factor.

This brings up another problem. We have unions in our province. Nobody is spending much time with them - either the Vietnamese government or ourselves. Of course, there will be problems as the unions grow and so on. There will be competition between the commercial leaders on sea and on land and so on. The rich

people in Da Nang would like to sew up all the sea transport. They don't give a damn about it. Like any businessman anywhere - where he can get business and he can squeeze out the little guy out in the boondocks - then he'll do so. But the little guy in the boondocks, we've found, is highly competitive in terms of cost. Furthermore, labor being cheap - this transshipment bit - manhandling and so on is not as prohibitive as it would be in our country. I think that it's presuming a lot to say, oh don't bother with the sea because it's never going to amount to anything anyway.

As for this having effect on the local population's attitudes, the evidence is somewhat negative. In terms of fishermen, who are the people who have the boats and so on. I know for a fact that the fishery service has done very close to nothing for over a year because I've been there all the time and I've checked their program and I've talked to them and I've tried to get them to do something. They have not achieved the Revolutionary Development Program. They haven't even gone down to the sea. They're afraid to go there. They have five motors to distribute, funds for nylon fishnets and various other things which were not spent. So they had to be taken away and used for other purposes rather than being lost. That man has been replaced. We have another one who appears to be equally incompetent. Accordingly, I can simply say that if I were a fisherman, I would consider my government to be a cipher. I've not seen its representative; he's done nothing for me or for any of my colleagues and any business or activity that I've had is due exclusively to my own luck and initiative. Now, at this point, where people are beginning to get good contracts for useful work from their own government, or from us which is essentially the same thing, I believe this will make considerable difference in their attitude.

There are plenty of fishermen shifting from fishing to freighting. The efficiency of fishing has improved: With nylon nets and motors and so on, a much smaller number of fishermen can catch all the fish that anybody needs. So you have a technological unemployment build up. As it stands, there certainly is no problem in that direction. It's underemployment rather than overemployment or unemployment. I think one also has to face another factor. Vietnam is a very poor country. We're finding this out because we're financing all sorts of modernization and repair programs. Isn't this dandy? We'll write off

these junks and instead we will go full steam ahead on a program of land transport by roads and by railroads. Now, what do you think of the capitalization requirements of highways to build and to maintain - the same way for railroads - and the rolling stock, the number of trucks, trains and cars and so on, and amortizing them periodically. Most of that is going to be in foreign exchange. Then you take the cost of your sea transport by junk - where Vietnamese go down and cut down Vietnamese bamboo and weave it together and they cut down Vietnamese hardwood trees up in the mountains and Vietnamese A pays Vietnamese B for this and needs Vietnamese to construct the thing - the only thing that is imported is maybe his compass if he has one.

### U.S. Bureaucracy in Vietnam - Problems

#### Acquisition of Goods

Speaking of outside support in terms of stated needs, I'd like to talk about some of the problems that come up. I'll mention one that I didn't solve; the first thing that the province chief asked me for after I went to work there. He said he was setting up a women's auxiliary force. He needed uniforms for them. They were going to do first aid work and social welfare work right behind the troops after they ran the VC out and they were beginning to pacify. It would just help an awful lot if they could get some kind of uniform. So, I studied the budgets and found nothing there. I checked our warehouse and nothing there. I talked to Da Nang and nothing there and I appealed to Saigon and nothing there. At that time, we had the authority to deal directly with Saigon, so I appealed back to them and said, "Well, dammit go out and buy some." They came back and let me know that you don't go out and buy things - what we're really running is a surplus commodity warehouse and if we happen to have something that somebody gave us why we'll give it to you but, otherwise, nothing doing. I fought that one for quite a time, but I never got an inch of cloth nor a single tennis shoe.

I had no idea who the contact was in Saigon. I usually addressed things to USAID Saigon, usually provincial operations who presumably can find out and channel the thing to the proper technical service. What I think happened there was somebody looked at the catalogs they had in the warehouse and there

wasn't anything like this in the catalog, so it was quite simple. The answer is no, we can't help you. My philosophy then was, and it still is, I didn't come out to Vietnam simply to do the easy things and to see what was in the warehouse and if it was there, hand it out, but to accomplish important objectives. So when the province chief asked me for something it was important to him; it was the first thing he asked for. I studied the thing over and I agreed with him that it was important. They don't have the women doing very much there. It's a good idea to harness the women into the activity too. It would double the strength of the country, so let's get it off the ground. Let's also show him that when he asks me for something, maybe I can't get exactly what I want but I can get a little action. I felt that my reputation to a certain extent was at stake. I hadn't proved anything yet - I just talked to him.

So I couldn't get anything out of Saigon<sup>0</sup>. But cables, letters, the pitch went up - nothing happened. So I cranked that one down as a failure, either due to my inability to express myself persuasively enough or, what I really believe more likely, it met with a sort of inherited attitude among many people there based at a time when the program was smaller and nobody really expected to do anything specifically - they were just kind of doing good. It wasn't in the program. If things aren't in the program you have to wait and put them in next year's program.

I wrote some very nasty telegrams to Saigon before I got through and there was no doubt in the minds of several people there, who probably to this day bear a certain amount of rancor for the tone of my telegrams. There's no doubt in my mind that I'd do exactly the same thing again because I felt that some people had to be made mad enough that they would re-examine their thinking. I tried everything, "Go out and buy some," or "Well, give me the money and I'll go buy some." There are many, many ways to solve most problems if you want to. But, whoever was involved didn't happen to want to solve this problem. I think it was indicative of something that had been going on in that country for many years which in a large part, I think, has disappeared. It certainly has up in I Corps because the same time I moved in there, two or three other foreign service officers moved into other provinces and they're like me - you send them out there to solve problems - well, let's get with it - let's solve the problem and don't give me excuses - let's get some action. Let's do it. So, when somebody indicated they couldn't do it,

you draw them a picture of how they can do it and they still say they can't, or else they simply don't answer you which is the easiest way to handle the thing. The same thing happens on the Vietnamese side. They say things have improved now - they're more responsive, but at that time, I think that they looked into their crystal ball and scratched their head and decided "no" - and that was it - no! And nobody bothered giving you an explanation or anything else - just "NO, we don't have it - NO, we can't get any - NO, you can't have any money to get any yourself - that's NOT in the program." But as far as I'm concerned, I'm not going to hang around for a year or a year and a half until I have a chance to help write the next program because I'm there on an eighteen-month tour. I'll get my thoughts put into the program just about the time I'm leaving.

I told the province chief I was sorry but that I wasn't able to help him. I told him what I did. "I guess our government is something like yours in this specific case - you can't win them all."

A couple of months later, unannounced, in came a large shipment of clothing and food supplies and so on to be handed over to the Montagnard service. We examined this shipment and I found in it some items which were just exactly what I had asked for a couple of months before, but which they didn't have. We thought about this briefly and then, I took a sample of each into the province chief and asked him whether he still needed these items or whether he'd given up too. He said, "No, as a matter of fact I was still hoping against hope that I could get this going." So I explained what had happened. I said, "Now, you have a choice. I've been instructed to hand these over to your Montagnard service. But I'm not about ready to hand over anything that's to be handed over to the Montagnards in your province unless you know about it and unless you concur." He said, "Well, I think I'd like about 50 of each. Actually, this advisory group is not going to be as large as I had contemplated." "Fine - we'll send them right over," which we did. Then the rest of it we sent over to the Montagnard service. He didn't really have any objections.

Then I informed Saigon of this and got a rather curious reply indicating that these things were for the Montagnards and where did we get off changing the destination of them. So I wrote

back another one stating that well, we had no objection to being delivery boy for Saigon for the Montagnards or anything else but we did object to anybody in Saigon attempting to second-guess the province chief and decide what's going to be done in his province and also second-guessing me; that it may or may not be a good idea but here the province chief is to be faced with a fait accompli - particularly in a very delicate area such as Montagnard affairs. The province chief in this case can't get help from USAID in a project he considers important, but those third-class citizens, the Montagnards, can get it direct. I said, "What are we trying to do? Make trouble for ourselves with this government? Interfere with the operation of the country? Convince them that we're trying to generate a Montagnard revolt or something, maybe?" I mean I sort of overplayed the thing and I didn't hear any more out of Saigon. Later on in the monthly report there was some sort of nasty dig about this, that so much was done, that not too much was done in Quang Ngai because that nasty province chief preempted some of the supplies.

The objections came out of the Saigon Montagnard Affairs Office that we had tampered; that they gave us instructions; that we didn't have the authority to lay a finger on any of it. You simply close your mind and deliver - that's all you were told to do is deliver it. And I don't see our role there as blindly delivering something, because I don't see that anybody in Saigon knows as much about my province as I do. And I don't see anybody in Saigon on the Vietnamese side who knows as much about what should or shouldn't be done as the province chief. It is a very unfortunate administrative way of operating to bypass someone. Generally speaking, probably their judgment is good and we wouldn't object but, to take the point that we have neither the authority or the responsibility to second-guess or to check with the province chief, I think is most unfortunate.

#### Transportation

I'd like to mention here an aspect of transportation of personnel and goods. This is a serious problem in which, I believe, we in the United States have misallocated our resources. There are between 1800 and 2000 helicopters in Vietnam. All of them except five, to the best of my knowledge and belief, are under military control and therefore used primarily, almost exclusively, for military purposes. The only exception would be

when somebody can scrounge one on an ad hoc, one-shot basis, maybe if it isn't pre-empted for something else at the last minute. There are five others which CIA contracts for, USAID has none, and the Vietnamese civil government has none. The logical result of this simply is, in the first instance, the Vietnamese government officials - the province chief, his service chiefs, and so on - are not able to get to the mountain districts, which is half the districts, except on rare occasions with scrounged transportation. Half the districts are only accessible by chopper. The representatives of government in those districts are not able to come in to province headquarters either to get the guidance and information. So, in effect, we govern by radio. If we give any advice, we give that by radio too. But, if you can't get out on the ground to see what the situation is, and you can't go out to hear the person's problems firsthand and sort of eyeball it, chances are you're not going to be able to give him much advice or give him any orders and it's not going to be very helpful anyway. So those areas do not feel very much coming from their government - it's not very effective with the people and the people also know that they are pretty well cut off. It's somewhat the same attitude in those districts vis-a-vis province has toward Saigon. They're a helluva long ways off and those fellows sure don't have much time for our problems.

Refugees - that's certainly one time when we must get out to some places. We've accepted a responsibility there and we're not able to get there. One mountain district - for ten days we couldn't get there, MACV couldn't get there, provincial representatives couldn't get there. All we could do was listen to people's stories over the radio. We couldn't get any goods there, either. There wasn't any air transport available at that particular juncture. Also, I think everyone admits that the Vietnamese are short on personnel who are capable as well as experienced and so on. The VC assassinations, the inroads of the draft, the fact that it is an underdeveloped, uneducated country, relatively anyhow, doesn't give them very high capability. So, how in our country do we multiply the effectiveness of the executive? We give him a car. (In Vietnam they don't have very many cars.) If he's got to go some place very far, we put him in an airplane, and if it's a long drive from the airport into town, we say, "Well, get one of those choppers because you'll save half an hour or forty-five minutes" - if we're paying him \$15 an hour, we want to save that money -



we'll get more business done for the company. We don't think in these terms in Vietnam. We're sending people to the National Institute of Administration and spending a couple of years trying to teach them how to do something and we're not effectively utilizing ones we have. My guess would be that if somebody did a little cost analysis and threw in a factor for the imponderables that you can't put a value on - the absence of or the presence of officials to guide, control, advise, check, and so on, on the spot - we would find that the economics of allocating a few choppers to the civil government in order to make them effective and enable a province chief to see forty hamlets a week, instead of four or six, we would in effect have tripled or quadrupled the number of high level, capable officials, probably in a simpler or a cheaper way than we could by sending them two or three more Americans to advise them, one which psychologically makes us happier. We like to see them doing more themselves. Let's give them the tools, the technical logistic capability of doing this.

I don't see how anybody can look at that line-up of choppers (2,000 for military purposes, 5 for para-military purposes, and 0 for civil government) and then even if he qualifies it by, "Well, he can always borrow one from the military" - well, I'm here to say, you cannot always borrow one. You damn near never can borrow one. But occasionally you will at random get an opportunity to go along with somebody who's going some place where maybe you have a problem and maybe you don't.

I've written reports on our specific problems. I've written general reports on the philosophy somewhat as I've explained now - the overall rationale for supplying a few choppers which are assigned to USAID. MACV and the military want to keep everything under their control. Well, believe me, it's an old, old story but the person who's got the money, the person who's got the control over the equipment is always going to find that he has an emergency - the military will never admit they have enough troops, enough guns, enough weapons, enough planes, enough this, enough that - they're always short. A classic example of this was during an operation in the southern part of Quang Ngai about four months back. They generated a bunch of refugees. They wanted us to come down and take a look at them, and we wanted to. Their civic action people wanted us to come down, and they wanted to go down too. But the situation as it evolved was that it took quite a few days to get a chopper

promised to haul us down there including the Vietnamese Chief of Social Welfare and Refugees. Then we had to wait a day or so until the chopper actually materialized, then it only got as far as the marine field headquarters but not to where the refugees were and we spent all day there because we couldn't get a chopper any place because all choppers were being used for critical priority matters, as they had been for several days before. We eventually late that day managed to get a ride back to Quang Ngai.

A couple of days later we tried again and we actually got down there, to the district capital and to where the refugees were - most of them had gone by then (nobody knows where), then eventually we worked our way back home again - it took a whole day. It was explained that - oh, boy were we lucky - there weren't any choppers to spare but seeing as how it was us, you know. The point that I'm making is - at no time did they contact a large VC unit and yet the story was that they couldn't spare any choppers because every one was urgently needed on a priority basis for resupply, for moving troops, for this for that. I'm kind of a simple soul and so my mind said, "Well, what if they ran into a battalion of VC some place - as they do from time to time, that's what they are out for; at which time, they would have to move a helluva lot more units faster and the consumption of ammunition would go up rather considerably and other supplies. Where would they find the additional chopper lift if they were using everything they had on a priority basis? In short, they weren't using it all on a priority basis - just the old story of 'if you've got something, you're going to use it up to the hilt.' You're not going to give it to somebody else because you might need it on a priority basis half an hour later or so.

The MACV advisor is as helpless as I am. This is marine area. They're thirty miles north. I get up there every couple of months. We have a USAID advisor attached to the marines. So far he hasn't even been down to our province. His predecessor came down once or twice and we talked about these problems. The real hard fact of the matter is that the general in charge down there isn't really in charge; the general in charge is the general up in Da Nang. NO marine wants to give anybody a chopper at any time because, I agree, it's conceivable that five minutes later somebody runs into three battalions of VC some place and they blow the whistle and all choppers run for home and get troops and ammunition and so on. Maybe at that point, there

aren't enough - they need everything that they've got - press everything into service and it still isn't enough. Well, if you've given one away to somebody for all day and couldn't get it back, then you have to say, "Well, gee whiz, maybe a couple of marines got it because I let this go."

Another thing, there isn't enough room to build an airstrip for Beechcraft in most of these districts. The perimeter is so small that the airstrip that they have is under VC fire so you don't land there anymore unless you're crazy. An American won't land there, and I don't blame them - you get sniped at when you come in. You've got to send out a company of troops to clear the area and hold it in order to land a plane there. They can't do that every time somebody wants to fly in for an hour or so to have a conference. Furthermore, as our friends have discovered in the past, they are told that the troops are going out to clear, and they get ready to land and they get shot at, and eventually discover that the troops only went part way out and then went back. So - in these areas, when a chopper is needed, a chopper is needed and that's it. I think, we may win yet because the low land is the bulk of the country and most of it we can get to without choppers even though we spend all day going some places when with a chopper you could go to six or eight places and show the flag, and show the province chief's interest and presence and his deputies, and really get a lot of things moving. But we sure won't get far in the mountains without it.